

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 018845

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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG, US

SUBJECT: CALL ON ACTING SECRETARY BY INDIAN AMBASSADOR

1. SUMMARY: ACTING SECRETARY SISCO CALLED IN INDIAN AMBASSADOR KAUL JANUARY 23 TO FOLLOW UP EMBASSY PROTESTS REPORTED IN NEW DELHI CABLES 787, 863, AND 1020. KAUL RESPONDED BY STRESSING POLITICAL CONTEXT OF MRS. GANDHI'S REMARKS IN CHANDIGARH AND FAVORABLE COUNTER-BALANCING OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ABOUT INDO-U.S. RELATIONS BY PRESIDENT AHMED AND MRS. GANDHI HERSELF. KAUL MADE VAGUE ALLEGATIONS OF PAST CIA ACTIVITY IN INDIA AND CIA ACTIVITIES IN BANGLADESH. SISCO CATEGORICALLY DENIED THESE UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES AND STATED THAT SUCH UNFOUNDED ACCUSATIONS AND ALLEGATIONS HAVE LED TO A DETERIORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN GOI ON PART OF USG. BOTH CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING REGRET AT CURRENT SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

2. SISCO BEGAN BY REFERRING TO AMBASSADOR SAXBE'S STIFF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 018845

PROTEST TO CHAVAN JANUARY 15 OVER MRS. GANDHI'S UNWARRANTED

CRITICISMS OF U.S. AND SAXBE'S LETTER OF JANUARY 21 ON THE "PATRIOT" EDITORIAL. IF INDIA HAS ANY SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST US, THESE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION. MRS. GANDHI'S STATEMENTS MAKE US WONDER IF GOI WANTS CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THERE

IS NOT SUFFICIENT BASIS OF MUTUAL TRUST TO DISCUSS AN AID PROGRAM IN FY 76 AND THAT WE WOULD DEFER TALKS ON AID UNTIL FY 77. ON THE SITE PROJECT, SISCO GAVE KAUL LETTER STATING IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EXTEND PROJECT AS REQUESTED. WE INTEND, HOWEVER, THAT JOINT SUBCOMMISSION ACTIVITIES SHOULD GO FORWARD. WE WILL NOT MAKE PUBLIC ISSUE OF UNFAIR INDIAN ATTACKS. CONCLUDING HIS REPRESENTATION, SISCO STATED THAT HIGHEST LEVELS OF USG WANT GOI TO UNDERSTAND THAT GOOD RELATIONS MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET. THE DECISION IS UP TO INDIA.

3. KAUL RESPONDED BY STATING GOI IS SERIOUS ABOUT WANTING GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND TRIED TO PUT MRS. GANDHI'S STATEMENTS IN "PERSPECTIVE." HE EMPHASIZED THAT HER STATEMENTS WERE MADE AT A PARTISAN POLITICAL MEETING AND THAT SHE WAS SIMPLY WARNING HER PEOPLE IN A GENERALIZED WAY (WITHOUT REFERRING BY NAME TO ANY COUNTRY) TO BE VIGILANT. KAUL THEN MADE VAGUE REFERENCES TO U.S. INTERFERENCE IN BANGLADESH, AND HE ASSERTED THAT OVER PAST 20 YEARS U.S. HAS BEEN INTERFERING IN SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, CULMINATING IN 1971 "TILT" TOWARD PAKISTAN. REVERTING TO GOI POLICY TOWARD USG, HE MENTIONED RECENT FRIENDLY STATEMENTS BY BOTH PRESIDENT AHMED AND MRS. GANDHI. KAUL ACKNOWLEDGED U.S. RIGHT TO MAKE ANY DECISION ON AID BUT REGRETTED LINKING THIS TO BILATERAL POLITICAL RELATIONS. HE PARTICULARLY REGRETTED OUR DECISION ON SITE PROGRAM. KAUL WAS UNINFORMED ABOUT "PATRIOT" EDITORIAL BUT DENIED IT REFLECTED GOI POLICY.

4. SISCO ACKNOWLEDGED GENERALIZED NATURE OF MRS. GANDHI'S REMARKS IN CHANDIGARH BUT STATED THAT THERE WAS NO MIS-TAKING U.S. WAS MEANT. HE TOOK NOTE OF FRIENDLY STATEMENTS BUT REMARKED THAT UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES OF U.S. INTERVENTION MADE "MOCKERY" OF THESE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 018845

5. ON KAUL'S VAGUE REFERENCE TO BANGLADESH, SISCO RE-ITERATED THAT, IF GOI HAS CHARGES AGAINST US, IT SHOULD SPECIFY THEM. THE SECRETARY TOLD CHAVAN IN PARIS THAT WE ARE NOT "PLAYING AROUND IN BANGLADESH." HOW CAN WE SAY IT MORE CLEARLY? ALL OUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN TO PROMOTE GOOD BANGLADESH-INDIAN RELATIONS. AND NOW THE INDIANS ARE MAKING MORE UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES. "WE CATEGORICALLY

DENY THEM." SISCO SAID THAT WE CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT OUR WORDS HAVE NOT BEEN HEEDED, WHICH HAS LED TO A "DETERIORATION OF OUR CONFIDENCE" IN THE GOI. A CONSTRUCTIVE AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP CANNOT BE MAINTAINED UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. KAUL SAID HE THOUGHT WE WERE BEING

"UNFAIR" AND "UNREALISTIC" AND EXPRESSED REGRET AT CURRENT SITUATION. SISCO ENDED CONVERSATION BY ALSO EXPRESSING REGRETS. SISCO

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